

Quarterly Update of Activities of the Delta Watermaster

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Overview

- SWRCB Activities Impacting the Delta
- Update of Progress on Consumptive Use Study
- New Study Initiatives
- Systematic Improvements in Data Collection and Use
- Consolidation of Lessons Learned from the Recent Drought
- Emerging Issues in Delta Water Rights
- Coordination of Climate Change Response



SWRCB Activities Impacting the Delta

- **Update of the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan**
 - Phase 1: San Joaquin River & Tributaries
 - Phase 2: Sacramento Rivers, Tributaries and Delta
 - Both are proposed to include flow regimes and other aspects that relate to the Delta Plan
- **Hearings on WaterFix Petition for Changes to Water Rights**
 - Part 1 (injury to other legal water rights) will close next week
 - Part 2 (unreasonable impact on the environment) can be scheduled now that the BiOps have been issued and the environmental report has been finalized
- **Coordination with Regional Boards**



Update of Progress on Consumptive Use Study

- The CU Study compares seven different methods for estimating ET of crops in the Delta
- Preliminary Report on findings from the 2015 growing season was released in September, 2016
- Extensive field, satellite and other data were gathered for 2016
- Seven research teams were given a common dataset against which to “blind test” each method
- Comparison of responses revealed additional systemic differences
- Systemic differences are under collaborative evaluation on a temporally and spatially consistent basis to promote shared understanding
- The draft report on the CU Study will be delivered to the peer review panel next month with publication expected in the Fall



New Study Initiatives

- Data continuity initiative (“Mind the Gap!”)
- Pilot study of CU savings from fallowed land being set for 2018
- Follow with open water and riparian and floating vegetation?
- Pilot project to survey channel bathymetry
- Delta Measurement Experimentation Consortium



Systematic Improvements in Data Collection

- The Delta has improved its regulatory compliance
 - 2015 backlog has been cleared with virtually 100% reporting compliance
 - Issues with quality and consistency of reports are being addressed as encountered
- Insights from CU Study and Diversion Measurement are rapidly emerging
 - Drainage water returns are likely next (under CWA)
 - Estimation of seepage and retention after that
 - Correlation with studies of Net Delta Outflow Index and other regulatory improvements
 - Land use survey data will support improved water rights administration (and not only in the Delta)



Consolidation of Lessons Learned from the Recent Drought

- Our Office is coordinating with the Division of Water Rights to prepare and publish a “Drought Retrospective”
- Objectives:
 - Share perspectives: learn from all stakeholders
 - Provide transparency to increase predictability and promote preparedness
 - Integrated science for analysis of wicked challenges anticipated in future shortage conditions
- Learn from mistakes, including the malfunction of our enforcement model



Emerging Issues in Delta Water Rights

- Review of responses to 2015 Information Order
 - Patterns of water right support vary by region in the Delta
 - QA/QC remains a challenge which we are addressing systematically, randomly and episodically
 - Review protocols are being developed as part of drought response
- Issue of “overlap” between riparian and pre-1914 water rights is being addressed
 - Given the stakes and contending interests, resolution is likely through litigation
- Emerging issue of estimating and providing for water demands for habitat restoration



Coordination of Climate Change Response

- SWRCB Comprehensive Response to Climate Change
 - Resolution No. 2017-0012 (March 7, 2017)
 - Delta Watermaster has been delegated responsibility for coordination with the Delta Stewardship Council
 - We also coordinate with other agencies to integrate consideration of climate change in all actions
- Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee
 - Coordination of retrospectives of our collective drought experience and lessons learned
 - Participation in USBR's Structured Decision Making pilot
 - Expediting permit reviews for EcoRestore
 - Integration of insight collected in SFEI's *Delta Renewed* and State of Delta Science



Questions

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